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transport his commodities—cloth or furs—to the fairs and various parts of the country, has no other means of conveyance. Hundreds of kabitkas are often seen slowly making their way along the great roads, paved with the trunks of trees, and conducted, by a few carriers. The men are at the same time the hawkers and carriers of all Russia; they halt in every village where they hope to meet with buyers, and travel all over the vast extent of those cold northern regions.

A MIDNIGHT RIDE IN '98.

PART I.

FIFTY-FOUR years have now elapsed since the Irish rebellion in 1798, and though at that time I made no inquiry into the merits of the quarrel, and knew little of the actors in it, and cared nothing either for them or their motives, I have reason to remember the hot summer of that eventful year, as if it were but yesterday. I was residing in my father's house, in Danierstreet, Dublin, and was an undergraduate of Trinity College, which I had entered in '97. In the city we heard little of the rebellion and its concomitant miseries, and I seldom speak a thought upon it, except when reminded of its existence by the sight of the various corps of yeomanry, which had been formed by the lawyers and other public bodies. Prisoners were occasionally dragged in by the military, and handed over to the tender mercies of Major Sirr, in the Castle, who dealt with them as to him might seem fitting. "Poor devils!" was the only exclamation either in pity, sympathy, or antipathy, which ever escaped me or my companions on meeting with them. Politics, I remember, I considered "confounded humbug;" and "uniting," as forming a connexion with any of the secret associations of the day was called, the height of folly; but a good dance at an evening party I looked upon as a very serious business, which ought to be attended to in an earnest spirit. My sisters were both older than myself, and were fully imbued with the half sentimental, half traitorous notions so ripe at the time, and watched every movement with painful anxiety, either from some vague feeling of romance, or the instinctive sympathy which most women feel for the weaker side in every quarrel. But I laughed at their notions, and lost no opportunity of heaping such ridicule as I had at command upon the "patriotic" party. Once only were my feelings fairly roused to such a pitch, that I cursed the rebels in my heart, and wished them every one hanged, drawn, and quartered, and that was on the memorable night in May, when the whole Protestant population of the city turned out in expectation of an attack from the south. I had been invited to a ball in Merrion-square, but in consequence of the alarm it was postponed *sine nocte*. *Hinc ille lachrymæ.*

I had an uncle living in Wicklow, about nine miles from the town of Rathdrum, upon a small landed property, most of which he farmed himself. He was an old man, and a widower, and his family consisted of one son and two daughters, who had been at school in the neighbourhood of London for nearly three years; but after their mother's death, which had occurred but recently, they had remained at home. Floating rumours of the beauty and accomplishments of my fair cousins had occasionally reached me through my sisters, with whom they corresponded. I remembered nothing of them myself, as I had not seen them for six years; but every one knows, and I knew too, what a difference six years make in a girl who has already reached fourteen. From listening to conversation about them, I at last began to join in it, and my interest was increasing day by day, when an invitation to spend the summer with them came from my uncle. Enamoured as I was of the joys of a city life, I felt strongly disposed to accept of it. Not so my father, who feared to allow me to travel in the disturbed state of the country; but his glowing representations of the dangers of the way only roused my ardour, and I was already, in imagination, a victor over hosts of "base lackey peasants," whom I fancied myself leading captive to Grana Hall, and presenting to my cousins as the first fruits of my valour. My uncle assured us that his neighbourhood was still very peaceable, and, with,

true Orange fervour, expressed his conviction, that if any disturbances *did* arise, the loyal yeomanry of the neighbourhood would put them down in a manner that would strike terror into the hearts of all evil-minded persons. Animated by these assurances, I redoubled my solicitations to my father for permission to set out; but when a letter from Lily, the younger of the two Misses Gilbert, expressed the warm desire which herself and her sister felt to see me, my importunity knew no bounds. I was not to be denied any longer. "Well, Charles," said my father, after a long controversy one evening, "go, if you will; but if you are shot or hanged, don't blame me. We had better, however, give you as good a chance as possible, and as my friend Captain Hudson is going down to the town of Wicklow, with a troop of dragoons, on Wednesday, I will drop him a note, and ask him to take you under his escort thus far."

Nothing could have pleased me better. The following day was spent in practising the broadsword exercise in a hay-loft over the stables; I had no need for practice in pistol firing; I could already shuff a candle at twelve paces. The night before my departure, I was charging, in dreams, in the ranks of the dragoons in a heady flight, scattering the rebel forces

"Like thin clouds before a Biscay gale,"

and was highly complimented by Captain Hudson.

The eventful morning came. My portmanteau was sent over early, and placed on the military baggage-cart. At breakfast I was too excited to eat much, and my attention was, at all events, distracted by the innumerable messages which my sisters charged me to deliver, and one-third of which I never did deliver, and cautions from my father as to how I was to demean myself on the way.

At last I started! I was mounted on a "bit of blood" from my father's stables, a little bay mare, which we called "the Lyanna," an Irish word meaning *pet*, or *darling*, and in truth I loved her as my life. She was small—in fact, rather below the middle size, long in the body, and rather hollow in the back, with short symmetrical limbs, broad, but compact, and by no means clumsy hoofs, and possessed great width of chest. But it was in her head that I delighted; it was the perfection of symmetry, and was surmounted by small, delicate, silky ears, that were ever in motion. Her two large dark eyes beamed with almost human gentleness and docility. She was at this time about six years old. I am thus particular in describing, because, as will be seen presently, she played a prominent and important part in my tale.

Captain Hudson was a man of about fifty years of age, thirty of which he had spent in the field, in every part of the world. His iron-grey hair and moustache, bronzed features, calm but piercing grey eye, tall, erect, and sinewy frame, and a deep scar on his cheek, made him in appearance the *beau-ideal* of a veteran soldier of fortune. He had commenced his military career in the East Indies, and the only sparks of enthusiasm or deep feeling I ever noticed in his conversation, although he was a constant visitor at my father's house, was when he recounted the exploits of Clive, that marvellous man whose wondrous genius and daring made a handful of European soldiers more than a match for countless hosts of the fiercest chivalry of the East. From India he had passed to America, and was there engaged during the whole of the war of independence, often wounded, twice made prisoner, and suffering at times incredible hardships from cold, hunger, and fatigue, but enduring all with a sort of phlegmatic indifference, as if the worst misfortune that could befall him was incidental to his profession, and consequently not to be complained of. He had received a collegiate education, and had been a fellow-student of my father's, and still retained a strong love for the Greek and Roman classics, the only tie that bound him to his youth; for all his relatives were dead many a year before his return to Europe. He had been very successful while at the university, and still devoted his leisure hours to study.

On arriving in Rathdrum we stopped for the night. The captain and I put up at the hotel, and the dragoons were billeted in various houses through the town. On the following

morning he resumed his march to Wicklow, where he was to stay for a few days, and if all remained quiet he was to proceed to Hacketstown, a small town on the confines of the counties of Wicklow and Carlow, there to await further orders. Grana Hall was but ten miles distant, in another direction, however, across the hills; so here we separated. He advised me not to set out until the following day, when a corps of yeomanry would be marching part of the way, as the news had arrived a few days previously that a strong body of the rebels, under the command of Holt, had passed Wicklow Gap, and were dispersed in small parties in the vicinity. I promised to abide by his instructions, but after an hour's wandering through the little town, then no better than a hamlet, I felt so lonely and dull, and withal so impatient to reach my journey's end, that I ordered my horse, and despite my landlord's warnings and entreaties, set out alone, leaving directions to have my portmanteau sent on with the yeomanry. This was the commencement of my misfortunes:

For six miles I rode in safety across wild hills and romantic glens, the people on the wayside "clamping" their turf, and moulding their potatoes, and the children sporting in the fields, or lounging at the cabin doors in the sun, the pictures of happiness and contentment. I began to think the rebellion was a sham, and all the stories I had heard about it were lies; and that in short there was no rebellion. About mid-day I arrived at the village of Aughtim, in the midst of a barren district surrounded by grim hills, of savage aspect, covered thickly with grey rocks, that looked stern and forbidding, as the hot sun gleamed fiercely upon them. Here I fed the Lyanna, and had a tumbler of whisky-punch, an Irishman's beverage at all times, and in all seasons. In summer he drinks it "to keep out the hate," and in winter to "drive out the cold." Thus fortified, we again proceeded. A crowd of the villagers assembled to see me start, observing me apparently with great curiosity, and I noticed that the women shook their heads, and looked at me with a pitying expression of countenance; but nothing was said.

My road now lay along the banks of a mountain stream, amidst the same wild uninteresting scenery, but after about two miles it turned abruptly at right angles into a wide and rather romantic glen. The hills on each side were well wooded, or covered with heather; and rose from the river's brink almost perpendicularly. The water boiled fiercely along, amongst the huge boulder stones which from time to time had rolled down from the mountain side; and the willows along the bank leaned over, waving in the evening breeze, like a lover drinking in the music of his mistress' voice. The road was cut in the side of the hill, and was full of windings, caused by the irregularities of the ground. The long arms of the mountain ash threw their shade across it, save where, here and there, the sun flung in a fostering ray upon green banks covered with bluebells and daisies. He was already sinking in the west, and his light, as it fell athwart the hill side, shed a

golden hue on the tree tops beyond the stream, while the clear rich notes of the blackbirds were gently wafted across through the balmy air. There was no extended prospect, I could at no point see more than ten yards in advance: on my right the hill rose perpendicularly; on my left was the river, more wood, and another steep ascent. It was exactly the time, the clime, and the spot for lovers to whisper their vows, or children to sport and gambol.

A sudden and rather steep incline brought the road almost on a level with the river; and at the bottom, the latter was spanned by a small rustic stone bridge, across which a sort of lane led up into the wood on the other side. Lounging in various attitudes at the corner, were five or six men, some smoking, but all armed, as I could see the steel gleaming in the sun, while still at some distance. At the first moment of surprise, I felt considerably alarmed, and, "I am free to confess," rather disposed to turn and fly. But further reflection convinced me that my safest course was to advance boldly, as if unconscious of danger, for if the objects of my fear were friends, flight would make me ridiculous; if enemies, it would be useless; as one well-aimed ball would cut short my career long before I could reach the turn of the road. I rode on; a short thick-set man, with thin pale face, but rather intelligent features, and a black beard of at least a week's growth, advanced, armed with a musket and bayonet, and planted himself in the centre of the road straight in my way, looking at me with the calm, imperturbable air of one who had a duty to perform, and meant to perform it, though it was a matter of no personal interest in the world to him. This was encouraging! these are a yeomanry piquet, thought I, stationed here as a measure of precaution to examine all passers-by; but it is curious that they are not all in uniform; ah, perhaps it's not necessary unless at head quarters. It took but a second to console myself with reflections like these. I was roused by a peremptory order to stop. I pulled up: the party on the bridge stared at me with silence, while their companion seized the horse by the bridle, and said in a tone phlegmatic as his manner—

"Where are ye from, an' where are ye goin' to?"

"From Rathdrum last."

"Ye're an Orangeman!"

"No, I'm not: I know nothing and care nothing about orange or green."

"Well, thin, it ill becomes a suthyuch that's nayther wan thing nor t'other to be ridin' so nate a baste, when honestest min's thrampin' on foot. An' if ye're not Orange yerself, ye belong to the breed anyhow, for how the devil else would ye get into sich a nist o' Tory hunters as Rathdrum! Get down, I tell ye," and suiting the action to the word, he pulled my left foot from the stirrup, and with a smart push sent me sprawling on the road at the other side. I rose, covered with dust and boiling with rage. But what happened afterwards I must reserve for another chapter.

THE SWISS SOLDIER.

It has been the custom for several hundred years for those amongst the Swiss peasantry who can find no occupation at home, to serve for hire in the armies of foreign monarchs. Having been always celebrated for their fidelity to those whose cause they have once undertaken, most of the kings of Europe have kept them as a body-guard.

The dangerous nature of the calling they follow is, however, perfectly well known, both to themselves and their relations, and consequently, when a young man leaves home with the intention of seeking his fortune in foreign armies, both he and they but too keenly feel the uncertainty of his return. His reappearance is, therefore, hailed by his own friends and the other villagers with as much joy as if he had risen from the dead.

The return of one of these wanderers is portrayed in the accompanying engraving. And the artist has delineated with

wondrous skill and feeling, the unexpected joy, the home made happy.

The mother, busied with her household work, is seen in the corner of the kitchen: the father, whose locks time has whitened, and who is now quite deaf, is regarding the old family Bible which lies open on his knee. That book to him is something beside divine: it is a volume that wakes up old memories, deep and tender. There he has inscribed the births, the marriages, and, alas! the deaths in two or three instances, of those he loves. By him stands his grandchild, full of joy and surprise, telling good news, news that makes the heart leap up with gladness. It is the decline of the day. The sun is sinking, and a flood of golden light is on the scene. The mother has been speaking of by-past days, speaking in an undertone, and whispering to herself the name of one who is to her most dear. She has been thinking of her son, far